

# Under Fire

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By Richard Parker

Based on the drama of  
 Roi Cooper Megrue  
 Author of  
 "UNDER COVER"  
 and Co-Author of  
 "IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE"

## SYNOPSIS.

The chief characters are Ethel Wilmoughby, Henry Streetman and Capt. Larry Redmond. The minor characters are Sir George Wagstaff of the British admiralty and Charles Brown, a New York newspaper correspondent. Ethel, a resident of Sir George's household, secretly married to Streetman, a German spy, though she did not know him as such. Captain Redmond, her old lover, returns to England after long absence. From him she learns the truth about Streetman; furthermore, that he has betrayed her simply to learn naval secrets. The European war breaks out. Ethel prepares to accompany Streetman to Brussels as a German spy in order to get revenge and serve England. Captain Redmond, Ethel and Charlie Brown turn up at a Belgian inn as the German army comes. She is Madame de Lorde. She begins to work with a French spy. The Germans appear at the inn. Madame de Lorde shows a German secret service medal and convinces the invaders that she is a German spy. Charlie Brown barely escapes execution.

## CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

"Quite so!" the major agreed, "particularly as I like Americans. . . . And I would not wish to see any of them come to harm," he added significantly.

In his reply there was more than a hint that behind his urbanity and seeming good nature there lay an immeasurable capacity for the stern duties of a German patriot, who would unhesitatingly kill any who might stand in the path of victory.

"Again I get you," Mr. Brown said. "But what are you going to do with me?"

"I shall give you a pass through our lines that will take you safely back to Brussels."

Charlie heard him with dismay. "But I want to go to the front," he protested.

"You have surprised a certain movement of the German army," the major pointed out to him. "It is best you go to Brussels."

Some objection had already leaped to Charlie's lips when the door from the street was thrown open and a uniformed man—an officer—pushed across the threshold. Advancing into the room he exclaimed as he saluted:

"Ah, my dear major!"

Both officers clicked their heels together. And as he returned the salute Major von Brenig told the other that he had been expecting him.

Charlie Brown had started at the sight of the new arrival. And now he moved nearer to the man.

"By George, it's old Streetman!" he cried.

"I beg your pardon—who is this man?" the arrogant Streetman (he was now Strassman) asked the major.

"Charles Brown, a journalist from the United States," Major von Brenig explained.

Henry Streetman remembered Charlie then.

"Oh, yes! I recall him," he said disapprobly. "What is he doing with us?"

"We found him staying here," the



"What Is He Doing With Us?"

major told him. "My men nearly shot him as an English spy."

"It seems almost a pity they didn't," Streetman observed, with a dark look at the newspaper man. "He may be in our way," he said.

Mr. Brown thought it about time to resent Streetman's insolence.

"Really, didn't I meet you in Russia some years ago?" he inquired.

Streetman eyed him coolly.

"No, never!" he snapped. "I have never been in Russia."

"Haven't you?" Charlie exclaimed with a due show of innocence. "Why—I've heard—"

"You'd best keep what you've heard to yourself," Streetman interrupted him. He stepped close to Charlie so that the major could not hear what he said. And he scowled at the American like the heavy villain of some melodrama.

But Mr. Brown paid scant heed to the menace in the fellow's eyes. Somehow, he felt that he had established

fairly cordial relations with the major—Streetman's superior officer. And he did not believe that it lay within the spy's power to injure him greatly. At the warning the fellow half whispered to him Charlie merely smiled.

"Think so?" he taunted the threatening Streetman.

"Yes! Remember now you are inside our lines." And drawing the major to one side, Streetman said—"Major, what shall we do with him?"

"Send him back to Brussels," von Brenig told him.

"Perhaps we can find a better fate for him than that. . . . Is he safe here?" Henry Streetman remembered that the American had shown plainly enough—that afternoon at the house of Sir George Wagstaff—that he was in sympathy with the enemies of Germany. And now had come an opportunity to make the fellow pay for his animosity.

"He is quite safe," von Brenig said. And turning to the sergeant he ordered him to remove the American to an adjoining room.

Sergeant Schmidt at once proceeded to carry out instructions. And seizing one of Mr. Brown's ears in a firm grip he started him out of the room.

"You will remain here temporarily as my guest," the major explained. "But I should not advise you to attempt to leave."

"Listen, blondy—" Mr. Brown addressed his evil genius—for so the enthusiastic sergeant appeared to him—"confidentially, because I know you won't repeat it, if the French army misses you I'll never forgive them."

## CHAPTER XVII.

## A Wall—and a Firing Squad.

As the door closed behind the sergeant and his prey, Streetman turned to Major von Brenig.

"The damned Americans, we shall have trouble with them yet," he asserted.

"I hope not. They are not a bad people," the more moderate major replied.

"Oh, major—have my English clothes—my civilian clothes—arrived from Berlin?" Streetman asked.

"Yes. They are upstairs with my kit."

"Good! Then I can start tonight for the British trenches," the spy exclaimed.

The older man looked at him somewhat dubiously.

"You think then that your plan to be captured by the English will succeed?"

"It must succeed. This is a map of their positions." He drew a paper from his breast pocket and unfolded it. "The very keystone to their entrenchments!" he exclaimed. "It will be here at trench 27!" Streetman made a mark upon the map—"It will be here that I shall be found," he said.

"Trench 27?" von Brenig repeated.

"Yes! I shall be skulking around—and be taken prisoner. Then I shall give the English false information about a surprise attack that will enable you to break through their lines and smash them!"

"Splendid! Splendid!" von Brenig cried. "By the way—" he added, as an important detail came into his mind—"a man arrived here this afternoon from the Wilhelmstrasse on a special mission."

"Yes? Who is he?"

"A Captain Karl!" Major von Brenig said. "You know him?"

"No! And I must meet him."

"You don't suspect—"

"No, no!" Streetman assured him. "At the Wilhelmstrasse few of us know one another; still we cannot be too careful."

"He dines with us," the major explained.

"And then we shall look him over," Streetman said with satisfaction.

"Auf wiedersehen!" And Major von Brenig went to his room, congratulating himself the while upon the fact that he had so resourceful an assistant in that able young officer from the Wilhelmstrasse.

Henry Streetman lighted a cigarette, tossing the still blazing match into the fireplace. And he had not waited long before Henri Christophe appeared.

"Major von Brenig wishes to dine at once," the spy told him. "How soon can you be ready?"

"In fifteen minutes, m'sieu."

"Good! There will be three of us—Major von Brenig, myself and Captain Karl."

"Yes, m'sieu." Henri had already turned to hurry back to the kitchen when a bright blaze in the fireplace met his astonished eyes. It was entirely too warm an afternoon for a fire. Only a madman would have built one.

"Why, what is that?" he exclaimed.

"I lit a cigarette," Streetman said.

"I threw my match there." And to one of the soldiers he added, "Put it out at once!"

The man Otto hurried to the fireplace.

"Yes, yes, m'sieu! It is nothing! Only some tree branches—it can do no harm," the innkeeper protested.

In the meantime Otto had extinguished the blaze. He had crawled bodily inside the great opening of the fireplace, to make sure that he did his work thoroughly. And now he emerged,

sooty but triumphant, bearing some contrivance in his arms.

"Here is a telephone!" he announced proudly.

"What!" Streetman exclaimed. And he hastened to examine the find. "Oh, ho! What's this?" he asked.

Henri Christophe was no less surprised than the others. He took the instrument from Otto and turned it over curiously.

"Why, m'sieu—it is a telephone," he said with an air of the utmost mystification.

"I know, I know—but what is it doing there?" Streetman asked imperiously.

"I do not know, m'sieu," Christophe stammered. In a flash he saw that things looked very black for himself.

"Why did you hide it?" Already Streetman had found him guilty.

"I did not hide it, m'sieu!"

An inspiration seized Streetman then. And he took the telephone into his own hands.

"Who are you?" he asked in French, speaking directly into the transmitter.

The fellow received an immediate reply. And he said to his men in the next breath, "It was a Frenchman who spoke! That telephone leads to the French. It is the work of a spy." And then Streetman ordered Otto's comrade Hans to ask Major von Brenig to return.

Poor Henri Christophe forgot all about his simple menu. He stood there, crestfallen. The whole affair was too much for his befogged brain.

"You were warned against any attempt to communicate with the enemy," Streetman said.

"I never saw that telephone before," Christophe declared.

"Don't lie to me! You put it there!"

"I swear to you—" The innkeeper held both his hands aloft as he proclaimed his innocence. But his protestations had no effect upon the indignant Streetman. The man seemed absolutely relentless, inhuman.

"You are either a French spy or harboring a spy under your roof," he told Christophe. "It is an act of enmity to us. You must pay the penalty at once."

"On my honor I have done nothing—absolutely nothing!" Henri Christophe cried. Even in that moment his thoughts were upon himself. He was afraid for her.

"Our proclamations have told you what to expect," Streetman snarled. "It will be a good warning to the others," he added grimly.

The Belgian innkeeper stared at him as if in a trance.

"Before God, I am innocent!" he asserted.

The callous Streetman paid not the slightest heed to his denials. In a most brisk and businesslike manner he commanded the corporal to call in the guard and make ready a firing squad—"against the wall outside," he said.

Then little Jeanne Christophe opened one of the doors timidly. Some errand had necessitated her entering the room. And when she saw her father's ashen face it needed little intuition to tell her that there was some tragedy impending. With a low cry she sprang to her father's side.

"My father—my father—what is it?" she asked him.

"It is a spy," Streetman said contemptuously.

"Non, non, m'sieu!" she cried.

"Wait! . . . Come here!" he ordered her roughly. And Henri Christophe whispered to her to obey. "You have seen that telephone before?" Streetman inquired. Already the corporal had returned with four men, bearing rifles.

"No, no! Never in all my life!" the girl wailed.

"Your father hid it there," Streetman insisted.

"Non, non, m'sieu!" she said with all the vehemence she could muster.

"Enough of talking!" Streetman said with a cruel glance at her white face. "Take him out!" he ordered the corporal.

For one brief moment father and daughter clasped each other in a last embrace.

"It is the end, my little Jeanne! Good-bye! Pray for me!" Henri Christophe said brokenly. And in that instant a new dignity came to him—a dignity such as must have clothed the ancient martyrs, for that later tragic figure, for whom his own daughter was named—Jeanne d'Arc—when the supreme summons overtook them. "It is all over, ma petite," he repeated. And then he drew himself up to his fullest height and looked at his unyielding judge unflinchingly. "I am innocent, m'sieu!" he said.

Those were the last words that Henri Christophe spoke.

Henry Streetman made a gesture of impatience. The scene bored him.

Jeanne Christophe burst into a wild torrent of words. Alternately she addressed Streetman and her father.

"No, no, no!" she shrieked, as if she could not have that frightful thing—that monstrosity—happen. "Oh, m'sieu! For the love of God! . . . My father . . . I pray you. . . . No, no! He is my father. . . . I love thee, I love thee!" she sobbed.

"Oh, m'sieu—I beg you—"

"Take him out!" That was Streetman's only answer.

Little Jeanne would not leave her father's side. As they dragged Henri Christophe from the room she still clung to him. And still she shrieked: "For the love of God! No, no! Oh, papa, oh, papa! I love thee. . . ."

Major von Brenig looked inquiringly at his colleague from the Wilhelmstrasse.

"You wanted me, captain?" he asked.

"The proprietor here is a spy," Streetman said.

"Christophe—a spy? Are you sure?"

"Absolutely sure!" Streetman replied. "This telephone leads to the French. And I have settled the affair." Even as he spoke a scream from outside



"Against the Wall Outside," He Said. side reached their ears—a woman's scream. And immediately there followed the sound of a volley.

Major von Brenig turned his head and listened.

"Ah, mon pere!" It was Jeanne Christophe sobbing.

Already she had flung herself upon her father's riddled body.

Major von Brenig cast a reproving glance at his haughty fellow officer.

"Good God—so soon? Without investigation?" he exclaimed. "What if he were innocent?"

But Streetman had no misgivings. "Ah! It will be a lesson to these others," he said carelessly.

In the adjoining room Charlie Brown and the German sergeant had heard those shots. And now they burst upon the two officers in great excitement.

"What happened? Is it the French?" Charlie called.

"It is finished—the damned spy!" Streetman rejoined.

"What's happened?" Charlie asked again.

"A matter of war," the major told him briefly—"that is not on my conscience." He was far from approving of Streetman's hasty action.

"The execution of a spy!" Streetman interposed. And the words were hardly out of his mouth before several privates squeezed through the entrance to the keepleer inn. There were two files; and between them they bore a stretcher, upon which they lay something covered with a sheet. A little distance behind the gruesome procession Jeanne Christophe followed sobbing.

One glance told Charlie Brown what rested upon that stretcher—that it was the body of someone who but a few moments before had stood there in the slanting sunlight of the summer afternoon and faced the firing squad. Out of respect he removed his hat. He did not know who the unfortunate might have been. But nevertheless he was profoundly shocked.

"Poor devil, I'm sorry for him— whoever he was!" he said.

Major von Brenig drew a paper from a pocket of his coat.

"Here is your pass," he told the American as he handed him the document. "We have decided that you shall go to Brussels," he added. The major appeared to be in something of a hurry to speed the parting guest. He was, as a matter of fact, disturbed that the unfortunate execution had taken place under the very nose of a New York newspaper man. And now he wished to hasten Mr. Brown upon his way before he had further opportunity to pry into the details of the tragedy.

"But as I told you—" Charlie Brown began, taking the pass from the officer, "as I told you, I want to—"

"It is not a matter for argument," Major von Brenig said stiffly.

"And you had best start at once," Streetman added.

Charlie Brown saw that his aspirations to proceed back of the German lines were doomed. And now he accepted the situation as cheerfully as he could.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## THE RETURN

By ALICE H. BOYD.

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As the visitor came up the gravel path the man seated on the porch gave a great start and uttered a sharp gasp. The woman by his side stared, scowled, arose to her feet with precipitancy and flouted through the open door with the words spoken almost virulently:

"The bad penny has returned; that man cannot come into my house!"

The person she referred to had lost one arm. The clothes he wore were faded, ragged and of coarse fabric. He was unshaven.

"Well, my beloved and respectable brother," he hailed Joe Wharton, "I'm back. Missed me? Thanks, I won't come in, as I chanced to overhear the kind and loving suggestion of your high and mighty helpmeet."

Thus came Jim Wharton, and he smiled satirically as the other grasped his hand limply.

"Well, Jim, I don't want to appear too blunt, but I don't fancy your family would care much to have you hanging around. They are all working hard; circumstances have forced them down to a system. I reckon they've pretty nigh forgotten you."

Jim Wharton looked grave at this and his lips twitched. A certain sternness came into his face as he said:

"And I guess you'd be glad, too, I won't trouble you again."

Two hours later Jim Wharton stood at the gate of the home that he had deserted. He carried his battered old suitcase up to the porch, set it down near the open front door and peered beyond it. Seated in a room into which he could look Jim noticed that a chair was occupied by a woman, who sat rocking softly to and fro as though thinking or resting.

"It's make or break," he muttered deep down in his throat. "Mary!"

He had crossed the hall and entered the apartment beyond noiselessly. He stood directly before the woman whose name he had spoken. Inwardly every pulse was throbbing; his face was eloquent with hope, with doubt, at that vast critical moment of his life.

Mary Wharton opened her eyes. She did not start or cry out. A strangely sad and weird smile crossed her face, furrowed, mournful, but infinitely sweet and gentle in its every lineament.

"My dream—always of him!" she murmured, and brushed her dazed eyes with her hand, fancying this real presence the shadow of a vision.

"Mary!" he repeated, and his voice was husky and tremulous.

Then arose in those faded eyes, long wearied with ceaseless waiting and watching, a glow that sent a thrill through the frame of Jim Wharton. She realized his presence now. She arose to her feet. She noted his armless sleeve, his poor attire, and the eager soul expressing itself in glance and features.

"Oh, my poor, dear Jim!" she uttered waveringly, and then her arms were about his neck and his bronzed cheek covered with warm, welcome kisses. She was crying with joy, she would not release him, and the strong man was not ashamed to mingle his tears with her own.

"A bad penny come back, brother Joe's wife puts it," observed Jim, as the excitement of the welcome somewhat subdued, the old vein of humor and gallantry in his nature came to the surface. "What do you say, Mary?"

"It shall be the prodigal returned, and welcome and cherished," she said feelingly, and when she went out into the kitchen to prepare the evening meal he followed her, as in the old days, a glow of peace and comfort coming into his rugged face.

"I suppose Chester is quite a man, and Nellie"—his face fell. "They must think of me as a poor specimen of a father," he added in a depressed tone.

"Such a thought has never been expressed by them," spoke Mrs. Wharton. "I hear someone at the gate, Jim. It is the children. Let me prepare them for the greatest surprise of their lives."

The strong man stood shaken as a reed by the wind. Then he heard a glad cry, and rushing feet toward the kitchen.

"Father!" shouted his son, grasping his hand, and his bright face was aflame with affection and delight.

"Oh, papa! don't you know your own, own Nellie?" and his beautiful daughter had her arms about his neck and hung there, raining kisses on his bronzed face.

"It—it's too much!" uttered Jim Wharton brokenly. "I thought you had all forgotten me, but if Chester will carry my suitcase to a room, I have a few togs in it that will improve my appearance somewhat."

The three of them stared in marveling wonder as Jim put in a new appearance just as supper was ready. He was shaven, he wore a neat, almost elegant suit, a heavy gold watch chain crossed his vest. "I want to show you folks a little reminder of my mining experience in the West. I have only a few specimens of real money," observed Jim, scattering a handful of gold nuggets on the table, "but here," and he exhibited a bundle of drafts, "a fifty thousand dollars, first payment on my mine. Folks, you've given me the true glad hand when you thought me down and out. There is the nest egg of the Lucky Jim mine—all yours, and more to come."

She Did Not Change.

"Alice married a nonagenarian," "And did she change her religion for his?"

## BAKER'S COCOA

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THE food value of cocoa has been proven by centuries of use, and dietitians and physicians the world over are enthusiastic in their endorsements of it. It is said to contain more nourishment than beef, in a more readily assimilated form. The choice, however, should be a high-grade cocoa,—"Baker's" of course.



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Started His Train of Thought. Mrs. Kawkler—Then you and young Mr. Sharp are not on speaking terms any more?

Mrs. Blunderby—No, indeed. The last time I met him I told him my husband had locomotive attacks, and the young whippersnapper had the impudence to ask if he whistled at crossings.

## Soothe Itching Scals.

On retiring gently rub spots of dandruff and itching with Cuticura Ointment. Next morning shampoo with Cuticura Soap and hot water. For free samples address, "Cuticura, Dept. X, Boston." At druggists and by mail. Soap 25, Ointment 25 and 50.—Adv.

## Splendid Work by Woman.

Valuable work was done by Dr. Elsie Ingalls, who died recently. She was the organizer and head of the Scottish Women's Hospital units, staffed entirely with women, and offered early in the war to the British government for service with the forces. Refused at home, they were accepted by the French war office, and in the end they did valuable work in France.

When typhus broke out in Serbia, Doctor Ingalls took a unit to that country, went through the hardships of the retreat and was taken prisoner by the Austrians. Released in 1913, she set out for Roumania, where again she shared in a retreat. From the Dobruja she eventually took her unit to southern Russia, but the rigors of this campaign had told on her and she fell a victim to overwork and disease. She brought her unit safely away with her, but died when port was reached. Doctor Ingalls was born in India and educated in Edinburgh and Paris.

## Following His Bent.

"My boy always liked to get at the bottom of things."

"Where is he now?"

"In the trenches."

## Sugar Produced in Paraguay.

Paraguay in 1917 produced 759 tons of sugar, one-fourth home consumption requirements.